



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

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Attorney General Bruning Announces Sentence in Dawes County Murder

(Lincoln, Neb) Attorney General Jon Bruning announced Joseph Hotz, 26, was sentenced today in the December 2008 stabbing death of his roommate, 22-year-old Kenneth Pfeiffer of Sebastian, Fla.

“This is an incredibly sad example of another life ruined through drugs,” Bruning said.

Hotz received 20 to 50 years in prison for 2nd degree murder in the slaying of Pfeiffer.

He was sentenced to 10 to 20 years for the attempted 2nd degree murder of another man; and one to five years for making terroristic threats.

Finally, Hotz was given 11 to 32 years on three charges of using a weapon to commit a felony.

The sentences are to be served consecutively, which means he will serve 42 to 107 years in prison.

Pfeiffer was found in the off-campus residence he and Hotz shared while attending Chadron State College. He was stabbed more than 50 times.

Hotz also attacked another man, who hid in a bathroom while Hotz repeatedly stabbed the door.

Hotz’s attorneys claimed that Hotz was under the influence of hallucinogenic mushrooms and believed Pfeiffer was part of a plot to kill him. They requested that Judge Brian Silverman instruct the jury on the insanity defense based on these facts. The judge refused.

Assistant Attorneys General Doug Warner and Mike Guinan handled the case along with Dawes County Attorney Vance Haug.

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